

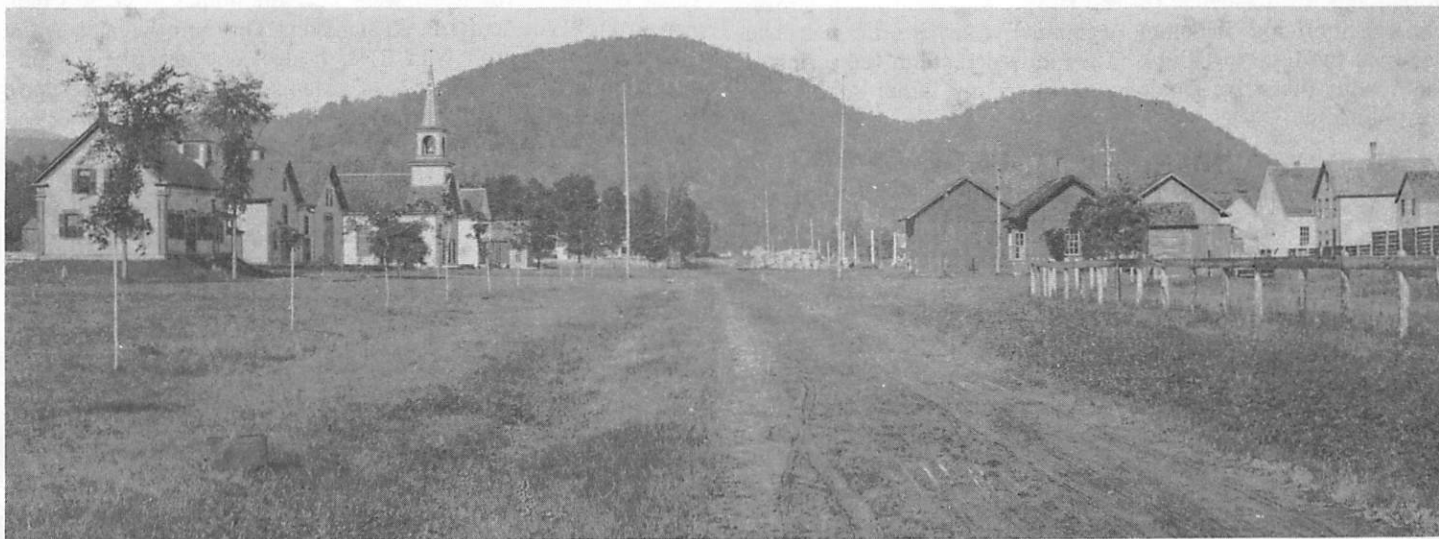


The Bethel Courier.

Volume V, No. 4

December, 1981

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Gilead Village c. 1898

GILEAD MEMORIES

by Emeline V. Heath

Editor's Note: The following sketch is by a Gilead native and Society member whose roots are deep within the town. Miss Heath, a former teacher and office assistant, is now retired and living in Gilead. This is the first of what is hoped will be a series of recollections.

The earliest settlers in Peabody's Patent (Gilead) probably arrived at about the same time as those in Sudbury Canada (Bethel). As related by Nathaniel Segar in his narrative of the Indian Raid of 1781, there was at least one family here at that time. James Pettingill was killed by the raiders but we do not know the exact location of his house or the number of survivors.

I remember some graves in a pasture on the North Road near the center of the town. They were marked by rough stones but no one knew the names or how long they had been there. Relocation of the road and the growth of woods have changed the place so that it may now be impossible to find.

By 1800, twelve or more families had established homes. This being Peabody's Patent, some of them were Peabodys. Thomas Peabody's Inn was built about 1800, I believe. It is still standing on Route 2 and near it, across the railroad track, is the Peabody Cemetery. Among others arriving about that time were two of my great-great-grandfathers, Joseph Heath and Cutting Bennett, from the vicinity of Bridgewater and Sanbornton, N.H. Some of their children were born in Gilead and lived here for many

(Continued on Page 2)

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RELATING TO GILEAD

George W. Chapman, BRIEF HISTORY OF GILEAD AND PROSE AND POETIC WRITING (Portland: B. Thurston and Company, 1867).

Page Helm Jones, EVOLUTION OF A VALLEY: THE ANDROSCOGGIN STORY (Canaan, New Hampshire: Phoenix Publishing, 1975).

Amos Wheeler, "A Tragedy of the Androscoggin on the death of four people who were drowned in the Androscoggin River April 21, 1803" and Orrison Drake, "Wild River Tragedy, Murder! Suicide! Charles Freeman of Gilead murdered himself and wife on the morning of June 11, 1851, the cause was jealousy" (Gorham, New Hampshire: Mountaineer Print, 1882).

Denman B. Wight, "The Ancestry of Thomas Wight and wife Alice Ruth Peabody of Gorham, New Hampshire (1964).

Denman B. Wight, THE ANDROSCOGGIN RIVER VALLEY: GATEWAY TO THE WHITE MOUNTAINS (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1967).

Denman B. Wight, THE WILD RIVER WILDERNESS: A SAGA OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND (Littleton, New Hampshire: Courier Printing, 1971).

John G. Wight, AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND MISCELLANEA (Utica, New York: L.C. Childs and Son Press, 1912).

Benjamin O. Willey, INCIDENTS IN WHITE MOUNTAIN HISTORY (Boston: Nathaniel Noyes, 1856).

years. Joseph's son, Timothy, married Cutting's daughter, Dillia, and their son, Josiah Heath, was my grandfather.

Old deeds show that Cutting Bennett bought from Jonathan Peabody in 1817, part of the farm where I grew up. For incorporation as a town, a settlement had to have a certain number of framed (not log) buildings and the ones on this land were among those existing here when Gilead was incorporated in 1804. My father built a new house in 1902 but the original barn is still standing. Its timbers are hand-hewn and joined with mortise and tenon joints and wooden pins. It must be nearly two hundred years old. My father used to astonish people by telling them that it was "built in Massachusetts." It was, indeed, "Gilead in the County of Oxford and Commonwealth of Massachusetts" until 1820.

After the death of Cutting Bennett in 1864, my grandparents, Josiah and Ruth Emeline (Stiles) Heath, who lived in the Grover Hill neighborhood of Bethel, negotiated with the other heirs and acquired the farm in Gilead. They moved there in the spring of 1866 with their five children, of whom my father Archie was the youngest.

I try to imagine what Gilead was like in those days and I will tell as well as I can what was told to me and what I observed in my early life.

Many of the farms were on the north side of the Androscoggin and there was a road on each side. I can remember cellar holes in places to which the road no longer went. They were referred to as if people still lived there. Old maps show where mills and dwellings once were. Gilead village, post office, store, railroad, and the highway from New Hampshire to Portland were on the south side. Before there was any bridge, crossing the river was at times a problem. When the water was low, I believe there was a place where horses and wagons could ford and in winter, roads could be made on the ice. I remember some as late as the 1920's. They were convenient for logging and as shortcuts. Before automobiles appeared, the local men who owned fast trotters often showed them off on the ice. Horses, sleighs, harnesses, bells, and ornaments must have made scenes like those of Currier and Ives, and when the musical bells of the logging teams disappeared, something very nostalgic was gone forever. At least one house remains in Gilead village which was brought down from Shelburne on the ice. It was formerly owned by my maternal grandfather, Edson Lary. There was once a ferry almost up to the Maine-New Hampshire line and I think there was also one near the present bridge. People in the lower part of town were more likely to go to Bethel than they were to come up to Gilead except for town meeting. Some boats and canoes were used and in 1803 a tragedy took the lives of four people who had crossed in the upper part of the town to visit neighbors. The story was told in rhyme by Amos Wheeler and published in a small booklet. The Androscoggin still reminds us occasionally that it is not to be regarded lightly.

No doubt the river had much to do with the fact that there were at first two churches in Gilead. One was on the North Road near the center of the town and not far from the graves of early settlers previously mentioned. The other was a little farther down and across the river, near the Peabody Inn and the Peabody Cemetery. (Cutting Bennett and Joseph Heath are buried in that cemetery.) The churches were of different denominations but after the construction of the suspension bridge they joined (about 1879) to form the Gilead Union Church with a new building in the village between the home of J. W. Kimball and what is now the National Forest Picnic Ground. There was a parsonage and for years they had resident ministers. As the older people died or moved out of town, the church became less active and within

my memory it was open only a few weeks in the summer, presided over by theology students. The parsonage was sold and later destroyed by fire, as many dwellings have been. The church came to be under the control of the Maine Congregational Conference when it no longer had enough members to survive and in 1966 they razed it and sold its furnishings, material, and land. The bell was said to be on its way to an African destination to be a memorial to a young lady missionary. Nothing more has been heard about that.

In the beginning, at least six school districts were formed so that there should be a school within approximately a mile of all the homes. Over the years, the school population varied and if the number of pupils became too few the school was closed and other arrangements made. Some of the buildings were still standing when I was a child and one is still in existence as a garage. Those on the North Road were near the homes of G. A. Chapman, A.D. Wight, and J.E. Richardson. On the other side of the river one was beyond Wild River bridge, one near the Peabody Inn, and one on the Bog Road. Maps differ, so they may have been moved while still active. Eventually, the one-room Gilead Village School (now Gilead Library) replaced the district schools, and was the only one in town at the time I attended. The one in the northwest part of town above Richardsons was used for a few years in the 1920's when there were too many pupils for the building in the village. Occasionally, it was more efficient to send pupils to schools in other towns. When transportation became an issue, there were some "headaches."

My parents and their brothers and sisters attended the district schools, which were ungraded and taught by men and women who had varying educational backgrounds. Pupils were grouped according to their achievement levels and advanced according to ability. One might read with one group and have arithmetic and/or English with another. This was still true to some extent when I started school. I still think we profited much by listening to and trying to do for our own satisfaction the work of our older associates. In our spare time we had access to textbooks and other good materials, often provided by our teacher at her own expense and effort. I was always happy in the one-room school and felt that I had excellent teachers.

Pupils were entitled to attend school as long as they wished and were studious. However, most of them would leave to seek employment or to attend a higher institution when they felt qualified. Older boys attended when the farm work was least demanding and girls and little boys went in the warmer weeks. School years were shorter and had a long vacation from the Christmas holidays until late in March. Occasionally a group of parents would join in hiring a teacher on their own to conduct a private school for a few weeks when the public school was not in session.

Advanced students often attended Gould's Academy for a few terms, "boarding themselves" in rented rooms in homes in Bethel. Some of those became teachers. For many years, high school graduates could qualify for an elementary teaching certificate by passing a state examination. Gould's once offered a "Normal Course" for prospective teachers. Many retired teachers can probably relate that they started in one-room rural schools, working at the same time toward their normal school diplomas by attending summer sessions and/or winter quarters at one of the normal schools.

With the establishment of consolidated schools, the one-room schools began to disappear. There has been no school in Gilead for several years. We are not a part of any administrative district and send the pupils out of town on a tuition basis. Who can predict the next development?

The Gilead post office was established July 4, 1823 with Thomas Peabody as postmaster. It may have been housed in his Inn. The maps of 1858 and 1880 both show that the post office was at J.W. Kimball's store and he was the postmaster. How many changes occurred between 1823 and 1880 I do not know but Kimball was the earliest name I recall hearing. The building I knew as Kimball's home and store was beside the church and occupied by members of his family until about 1920. The store was vacant most of the time when I was growing up and in 1922 the house underwent remodeling which eliminated the store. The first postmaster I knew was F.B. Coffin, who lived in the house on the corner of the road leading to the bridge over the Androscoggin and had a general store (now a dwelling) where the post office and public telephone were located. He moved away about 1920 and W.R. Kimball operated a store there for a time. I am not sure whether he was appointed postmaster or whether it was moved then. About 1922, G.E. Leighton, owner of a general store, mill, and other property nearby, bought the Coffin buildings and renovated them for his family. The store became a garage and the post office was installed in the Leighton store. I think his son, I.B. Leighton, was then postmaster for a while. In the summer of 1922, Mr. Leighton's brother-in-law, C.H. Cole, joined him in business and some time later, took over the store and the post office. More time elapsed and Mr. Cole's daughter, Shirley, became the youngest postmaster in the United States with the post office back on the south side of the track, near the Cole home (the J.W. Kimball house mentioned earlier). Shirley's life ended tragically during a severe electrical storm in 1940. Her brother, C.R. Cole, served as postmaster for a time, followed by Mildred Carroll and E.H. Bean. Mr. Bean sent out the last mail from the Gilead post office on the afternoon train the last day of September 1955. Those who wished to do so thereafter received their mail via Rural Free Delivery.

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NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Eleanor Wilson, Bryant Pond.

Arthur E. Barker, Stafford Springs, Connecticut.

Edmond and Sudie Vachon, Bethel. Mr. Vachon is the retired Headmaster of Gould Academy and president of the Bethel Savings Bank. He is currently a member of Society's Investment Committee. Since the opening of the Moses Mason House, Mrs. Vachon has headed the Garden and Grounds Committee.

MOSES MASON MUSEUM RECEIVES GRANT

This fall the Society received a Museum Assessment Program grant from the Institute for Museum Services of the Department of Education for the Moses Mason Museum. The grant will enable the Society to support the visit of an independent evaluator who will examine the museum and make a report to the sponsoring organization. The grant includes money for the evaluator and his expenses as well as covering the registration fee for the American Association of Museums and an allowance for the purchase of technical materials.

The grant is expected to be helpful in assisting the Society in its planning for the future of the museum as well as determining its needs. Founded in 1974, it is open to the public throughout the year by appointment and on a regular basis during July and August.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Bethel Historical Society has members scattered all over the country. An individual joins an organization like this one for a variety of reasons. But for each person I suspect that some of his or her "roots" have an anchor here. If not a family "root", then some sense of value is anchored by joining the society.

Bethel has an identity that stretches well beyond its legal boundaries. Many people believe that they come from "Bethel" whether their birth certificate says so or not. Birth certificates are legal documents but they do not record the sense a person has for their "roots".

Take L.L. Bean for instance. He was a "Bethel boy" even though he says in his autobiography, *My Story*, that it was the Greenwood town clerk who put his name on his birth certificate. Three years ago I had a chance to ask Leon Gorman, L.L.'s grandson who now runs the business, about his grandfather's Bethel connection. Right away he said, "Oh, yes. He came from Bethel you know. Did you know Eva Bean? She could have told you all about it."

Living in Milton Plantation did not provide much for L.L. to do or see outside of his family's farm. There was one hotel and one general store at the time. L.L. goes on to write:

"The real big event of the year was in the Fall when my father and mother went to Bethel Hill to get clothes, boots and a barrel of molasses at Seal Rowe's store, for the winter. They always brought home a bag of candy and copper-toed shoes for the three youngest children, Guy, Ervin and myself."

This month's issue of the "Bethel Courier" features articles about Gilead. We here at the Moses Mason Museum and the Bethel Historical Society hope that all of the people living in Gilead and those who live away but feel that Gilead is their home do not feel restrained by the "legalities" of town lines to come to the museum in Bethel and pick up a copy of the "Courier". But even beyond that step we warmly invite you to join as a regular member and get all future copies of the "Courier" in the mail once each quarter.

Donald G. Bennett

GILEAD

The town of Gilead was incorporated as the one hundred fifty-ninth town in the State of Maine on June 23, 1804. It was, according to Ava Chadbourne in *Maine Place Names*, called Gilead because of the great number of Balm of Gilead trees growing in the center of town. The population has fluctuated between a high of 374 in 1837 to the present level of about 200.

EDITOR'S CORNER

This will be the last issue of the "Courier" to be published with a month of the year in the masthead. Beginning with the next issue, all further issues will be geared to the seasons of the year: spring, summer, autumn and winter. This will allow me and all the volunteers who help with this publication greater flexibility in meeting deadlines. There still will be four issues during the year and I trust one will appear during each season.

SRH

From farther back than I can remember, our address on the farm was Bethel, R.F.D. 2. The route in those days was simply up one side of the river, across the Gilead bridge, and down the other side, a total of approximately twenty miles. The village residents and all above the bridge had to go to the post office for their mail but we had ours brought to us daily. We often received mail addressed to Gilead and sometimes took outgoing mail to the post office or directly to the train. (This was frowned upon but was often more expeditious.) The first carrier I remember, and perhaps the first of all, was Mr. Charles Valentine of Bethel and Mrs. Valentine was his substitute driver. He kept two pretty driving horses and later added a third, so each horse made the trip twice each week. In summer he had a carriage with a folding top which could be tipped back on pleasant days and also a boot to enclose the driver's space in bad weather. There was a transparent window and an opening for the reins. It seems to me that they were attached to something inside, so that they could not accidentally slip outside when he was handling the mail. In winter his sleigh was much the same sort of vehicle, with plenty of covered space for packages and I think a lantern, because darkness could easily overtake him during the short days. He had a musical string of bells which encircled the horse and could be heard a long way off when the horse trotted. We could see far up the road toward the bridge then because the trees had not been allowed to grow up and obscure the view as they do everywhere now. One of my earliest memories is of seeing Mr. Valentine's horse and sleigh coming down the little hills and along the field. There was always much snow in those years and the roads were often very bad. When either snowdrifts or high water made them impassable, he would have to return the way he had come and travel in the opposite direction the following day. The high water was most likely to come in spring and after several years the road was moved to higher land. There were a few times when the roads were impassable for more than one or two days and we and our neighbors would ask the Bethel post office to send our mail up on the train. Someone would go and get it, maybe on snowshoes, and distribute it. It was really exciting to see what would be included. The short days just before Christmas must have been especially difficult for Mr. Valentine. It would be nearly dark when he reached our place, his sleigh loaded with parcel post packages, both incoming and out-going. Postal rates were low. It cost two cents to mail a letter, (except for a while during World War I, when it was raised to three cents), and postal cards cost one cent. People sent many post cards which also took one-cent stamps. Many were of very good quality and the recipients collected them in albums. Newspapers and magazines were much less expensive and most farmers subscribed to dailies, weeklies, and farm publications. The women subscribed to magazines containing fashions, needlework patterns, recipes, short stories, novels in serial form, etc. There was usually a children's page which attracted me. After I was able to read, "The Youth's Companion" was eagerly awaited every week. It often contained a short story by C.A. Stephens, a Norway, Maine resident who wrote about happy times on his grandfather's farm. We had several of his books on the same theme. Mr. Valentine retired after many years on R.F.D. 2 and was succeeded by Albert Silver. Times were changing. U.S. Route 2 was built, snowplows replaced the six-horse teams hauling a roadgrader or a big wooden roller accompanied by shovelers, automobiles began to be seen on the roads in winter, and the winters seemed to become less rugged. Then for many years, I no longer lived on R.F.D. 2 and I may not remember the different drivers. Among them were Mr. Whitman and Mr. Bane. Parts of other routes were combined with this one until the round trip became about fifty miles. At present, the carrier is Ronald Kendall and his substitute driver

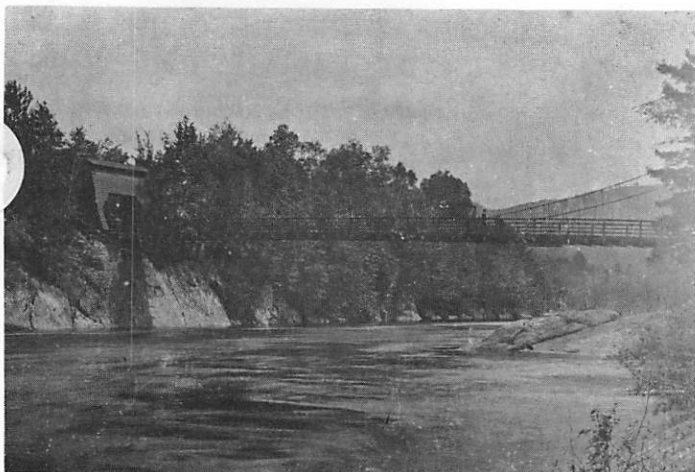
is Mrs. Fleet.

Unless you are a senior citizen, you may not remember the old Gilead suspension bridge. Built in 1872, it spanned the Androscoggin at its narrowest point near the village. Some people did not enjoy crossing the bridge. Signs at both entrances warned of a three-dollar fine for "driving or riding faster than a walk over this bridge." If a horse did enter at a trot, an up-and-down wave motion occurred and some of the loose parts squeaked and thumped until the motion subsided. To stop the rattle of the planks a second floor of thinner boards was added along the center of the roadway. At times, repairs and replacements were necessary and another coat of dull red paint would enhance the appearance. The water under the bridge is said to be nearly thirty feet deep and it is something to see when the river is in flood. (The present bridge is several feet higher than the old one and the road has been improved near it.)

The four cables, from which everything was suspended on steel rods of graduated lengths, were hung over wooden towers on either shore. One was set on the solid ledge which dropped almost vertically to the bed of the river and the other was set on a masonry abutment rising from the lower ledge on the other side. The fact that it is still visible a few feet from the abutment of the present bridge is evidence that those builders built things to last. The cables were bent, bolted, and secured through large rods fixed in the ledge. They inspired many questions when, as a child, I rode over the bridge with my father. I never did find out exactly what was inside the ledge. At least one of the anchors remained in place more than a hundred years but someone finally removed it, I heard. There were two cables attached to the sides of the bridge and leading to the ledge to prevent any sideways movement. Under heavy loads, such as logging teams, the bridge would sag and the low spot would move along as the load went, the horses always walking uphill although the roadway sloped towards the south shore.

Sometime before 1900, as a herd of cattle was being driven along the North Road, the leaders entered the bridge against the intent of the drivers. Instead of allowing a few to cross and then be returned, at least one man ran ahead of them and attempted to turn them back. The rest of the herd crowded onto the bridge until their weight pulled the cables from their fastenings and the bridge collapsed. News of the event made the New York City newspapers and was read by my mother who was there at the time but no one seems to have preserved a copy of that account. I do not know that anyone was badly injured. I think only one end of the bridge went down and that it took long enough for the people to get clear but some of the animals were less fortunate. The necessary repairs were made and the bridge continued in service until the early 1920's. The plate on the new steel bridge bears the date 1922 but the project was not finally completed until much later. Later still, a great deal of work was done on the North Road near the bridge. In spite of efforts to make the area safer, the bridge bears many scars and repairs, and a few people have had very narrow escapes due to poor judgment. The horse and buggy days were certainly less hazardous!

Bridging Wild River was a different problem and one which had to be dealt with very soon after the incorporation of the town. After some delay a bridge was constructed in 1813 but I do not know what it looked like or whether it was the same one that I saw about a century later. Probably the covered bridge was not built until later. Although Wild River appears peaceful most of the time, it can rise rapidly and be very destructive. It is said that repair and rebuilding went on for about



Gilead Suspension Bridge - June 6, 1897

forty years. The covered bridge had more than one span and was about where the present bridge, built in 1928 and enlarged later, is located. I don't know the name of the builder but I believe it was of Paddleford construction. Few pictures of the interior seem to be in existence. I remember the pier in the middle of the river, built of granite blocks and designed to withstand the ice which might come down whenever winter rain or spring thaw took place. If sleds crossed in winter it was usually necessary to strew snow on the floor where the runners went. There was not much traffic on that road in winter and much of the time it was impassable to Shelburne, N.H. People traveled by train and teams used the North Road or logging roads which might be available. Stories were told of the difficulties of helping doctors to make trips to homes when the roads were very bad. No one would have thought of driving a car in winter before the construction of Route 2. I remember one occasion when a passenger train was stranded in Gilead for many hours, waiting for the track to be cleared of drifts. Their chief problem was to find enough food.

Just below the highway bridge across Wild River is the railroad bridge, one of the longest on the line between Portland and Island Pond. I was told that the builders of the railroad once considered putting the track on the north side of the river to avoid building that bridge and some lesser bridges on this line. However, they built the bridge and it is quite an achievement. There are three piers in the river, which is very shallow there but often is partly filled with the unpredictable ice. There is only a single track, so trespassers are wise to keep off the structure. There used to be many trains every day. As school children, we were much entertained by observing the activity. Freight trains would wait on a siding for other trains to pass. Sometimes a car would have a hot box and have to be set off and left. When the mill was running, a local freight brought cars and took cars away. During both World Wars, guards were placed on the bridge. Their duty was to cross the bridge on foot after every train, looking for signs of sabotage. They never found any that we heard of and we wondered what they would have done if they had. They were local men during WWI but during WWII, a small group of service men were stationed in Gilead. Any damage to the bridge would have been a serious matter because of the freight coming from Canada and the West.

(cont on p. 6)

BOOK REVIEW

History of Bethel, Maine by William B. Lapham, New England History Press in collaboration with the Bethel Historical Society, 1981.

Among the Bethel Historical Society's most successful ventures has been in the field of publication, beginning with two modest booklets on Molly Ockett (1969) and Moses Mason (1974) now recently revised and republished. The latest work, a reprint of William B. Lapham's 1891 *History of Bethel*, is one of the Society's most ambitious projects to date and satisfies a long-awaited need for the reappearance of the town's only published history. With the addition of new indexes and an essay on Bethel since Lapham's day written by Society Director Stanley R. Howe, the new edition is sure to be a welcome part in the collections of local history enthusiasts, as well as anyone interested in Bethel's past.

Boasting a dust jacket with an 1870's bird's eye view of the settlement of "Bethel Hill," the new volume reproduces the original text and more than sixty views of the town and its residents, carefully selected by Lapham. The historical essay by Director Howe, entitled "Historical Perspectives on Bethel Since Lapham" is quite concise and attempts to cover briefly the period from 1891 to 1981. In the process, it touches upon subjects familiar to Lapham in his day and breaks new ground with highlights of more recent developments. As such, the essay whets the reader's appetite for a more comprehensive history of the town which the Society anticipates publishing in the not-too-distant future.

Lapham's dedication of the book to Timothy A. Chapman of Milwaukee who subsidized the 1891 work and his acknowledgment of Dr. Nathaniel T. True's efforts in compiling data on Bethel in the original "Courier" (1859-61) once again appear prominently in the first pages of this work. Throughout the book Lapham, though born in neighboring Greenwood, Maine, displays a unique familiarity with his adopted town. Here, he attended Gould Academy under True and later apprenticed in the medical profession under Dr. Almon Twitchell. Though providing extensive source material on changes in everything from land grants and Indians to churches and industry, he fondly points out that "the river, the crystal brooks, the broad intervalles, the hills and mountains and all the varied scenery remain the same, and after the lapse of all these years, can be called in review at will." Today, Lapham could still find his way among the "hills" about Bethel, which long ago received recognition as one of the town's most valuable assets. In addition, the important section on family statistics, which it is hoped will be corrected and updated in any new history of the town, will find favor with genealogists and historians alike. At the same time, readers with ancestry in the towns of Newry, Hanover and Gilead will likewise find much of interest here.

The present Lapham *History* is a joint effort of the Bethel Society and the New England History Press of Somersworth, N.H., which has reprinted numerous Maine town histories of late including those of Augusta, Gorham, Brunswick and Kittery. It and the Society are to be commended for once again making available this celebrated contribution to Maine historiography.

Randall H. Bennett

IN MEMORIAM

Died, October 16, 1981, Ruth Cole Hastings at Norway, Maine. Mrs. Hastings was a longtime resident of East Bethel and a former teacher in the Bethel schools.

COMMUNITY COOPERATION: THE SOCIETY AND S.A.D. #44 ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Over the past several years a fruitful cooperative effort has existed between the Society and the local Adult and Community Education program. A number of programs have been co-sponsored by the two groups, and the Moses Mason House meeting room, as well as the archives, have been the site of a number of courses. Many individual Society members have acted as instructors for courses, while many more have participated in the programs as students.

Among the courses and their instructors have been "Antiques" (Barrie Freeman), "Understanding Canada" (Stanley Howe), "5-Alive", "Stress Management Workshop" (Suzanne Taylor and Sue Farrar), "Architectural Styles" (George Allen) and "Biography" (Stanley Howe).

Craft courses have also been popular at the museum: "Rug Braiding" (Florence Hastings and Virginia Daigle), "Chair Seating" (Floribel Haines and Agnes Haines) plus an all-day Christmas Workshop. At Telstar High School Society President Donald Bennett and his wife Kathy have conducted a painting class. Society member Alvin Barth gave a course in Archaeology, featuring the Bethel area.

Another example of this cooperation was the film series in 1981 "Issues and Images" which is being followed this year with one entitled "The Christians."

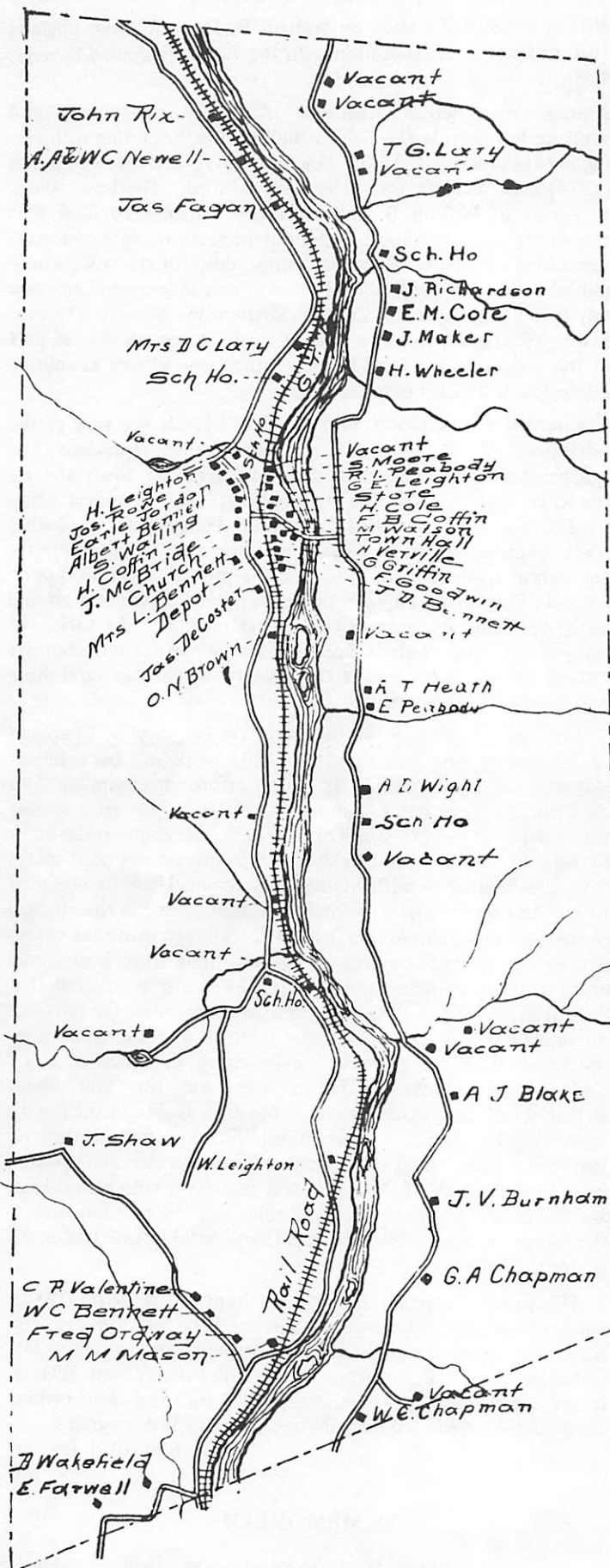
The many courses and programs offered jointly by the Society and S.A.D. #44 Adult and Community Education are a strong testament to the Society's commitment to a strong sense of community in addition to the study of the past.

Much credit for this interest in using the great local resources is due to the efforts of the Director of Adult and Community Education, Catherine Newell, who has long been active in the Society as vice-president, president and currently a trustee.

It was in the 1930's, while the post office was in Mr. Cole's store, that a few of us waited one afternoon to welcome Postmaster General James A. Farley, whose party was expected to pass through Gilead at a certain time. The gathering was very informal. Everyone simply left what he was doing and made a trip to the store. The traffic on Route 2 in those days was very light and we had no trouble seeing the shiny black cars as they approached. Flags appropriate to the Post Office Department and the Postmaster General fluttered at the front fenders. Mr. Farley and three or four other men came in to see the Gilead Post Office and shake hands with the citizens. I had a pen and a copy of a government publication for stamp collectors which I asked him to autograph on a page containing his signature. He remarked that he would have to be sure it looked exactly like the printed one or I would think him an impostor. I think he wore a pin-stripe suit and carried a straw hat. In moments they were on their way to New Hampshire and more elaborate receptions while I trudged back to the farm with the autograph for my stamp collection.

E.V.H.

Published quarterly by the Bethel Historical Society, Stanley R. Howe, Editor. Please address all inquiries and suggestions to Editor, Bethel Historical Society Newsletter, Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217.



Map of Gilead (1911)

SOCIETY TO FEATURE FILM AND LECTURE SERIES

In cooperation with the University of Maine at Farmington, Westbrook College and the Maine Council for the Humanities the Society is featuring a film ("The Christians") and lecture series ("Maine Women Writers") beginning on February 24 and continuing each week until April 28 in the Society's meeting room. The schedule is as follows: February 24, "A Peculiar People"

MOSES MASON MUSEUM GIFT SHOP LIST

Tiles: Moses Mason House \$3
Stationery: Moses Mason House \$2
(pack of ten sheets and ten envelopes)
Bethel Railroad Station \$2
Summer House, Moses Mason Museum \$2
Post Cards: Dr. Moses Mason portrait by Chester Harding \$.10¢
Agnes Straw Mason Portrait by Chester Harding .10¢
Moses Mason House .10¢
Booklets: The Family Farm 75¢
Made in Bethel 75¢
Dr. Moses Mason and his House \$1.00
Bethel's Broad Street 75¢
Molly Ockett \$1.50
The Gould Academy Story \$7.50
The Bethel Historical Society Cook Book \$5
Placemats: 1878 Bird's Eye View of Bethel \$1.00
Four Season Set \$6.95
Moses Mason Museum Tote Bag \$7.95
Oxford County Atlas of 1858 \$5.00
Moses Mason Museum Log Carrier \$12.95
T-Shirts: Moses Mason Museum Adult: \$6.00 Child: \$5.00
Sudbury Canada 1768-1796 Adult: \$6 Child: \$5
Indian Raid Adult: \$6.00 Child: \$5.00
Special Editions
1974 - \$1.00
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I Was a Summer Boarder by Ruth Crosby \$3.50
From An Old Leather Trunk by Ruth Crosby \$3.50
History of Bethel by William B. Lapham \$47.25

(film); March 3, "The Birth of Europe" (film); March 10, "Faith and Fear" (film); March 17, "Princes and Prelates" (film); March 24, "Protest and Reform" (film); March 31, "Solitude and Aging in the Works of Sarah Orne Jewett and May Sarton" (lecture); April 7, "In Search of Tolerance" (film); April 14, "Ethical and Political Issues in 19th Century Maine Writers" (lecture); April 21, "Politeness and Enthusiasm" (film); April 28, "Roots of Disbelief" (film). The series is free and open to anyone interested. Each session will be followed by discussion.

1982 SOCIETY PROGRAM

January 7 - "So You Think You Know Bethel"
February 4 - "Highlights of Gilead's Past"
March 4 - Historical Film Series
April 1 - "The Park Through the Years" (Rosalind Chapman)
May 6 - Collector's Night
June 3 - "History of Mason Street" (Ernest Perkins)
July 1 - Joint Meeting with the Waterford Historical Society at Waterford
August 5 - "Maine Churches" (Robert M. York, University of Southern Maine)
September 2 - Annual Meeting (Pot Luck Supper)
October 7 - Annual "What's it"
November 4 - "Bethel During the Great Depression" (Margaret Joy Tibbetts)
December 2 - Annual Christmas Program
Unless otherwise specified, all meetings begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. and are held in the meeting room of the Dr. Moses Mason House.

BETHEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Donald G. Bennett, *President*
Alden Kennett, *Vice-President*
Mary C. Keniston, *Secretary and Clerk, Board of Trustees*
E. Louise Lincoln, *Treasurer*
Margaret Joy Tibbetts, *Trustee to September, 1982, Chairman, Board of Trustees*
Helen Morton, *Trustee to September 1983*
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Catherine Newell, *Trustee to September, 1984*
Ronald Snyder, *Trustee to September, 1984*

Join the Bethel Historical Society dedicated to preserving and interpreting the local past.
Membership in the Society entitles you to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) free admission to the museum | (5) quarterly newsletter |
| (2) special discounts at museum store | (6) reduced course fees |
| (3) preferred rate for meeting room rental | (7) voting rights in the Society |
| (4) special library and archival privileges | (8) special invitations to Society occasions |

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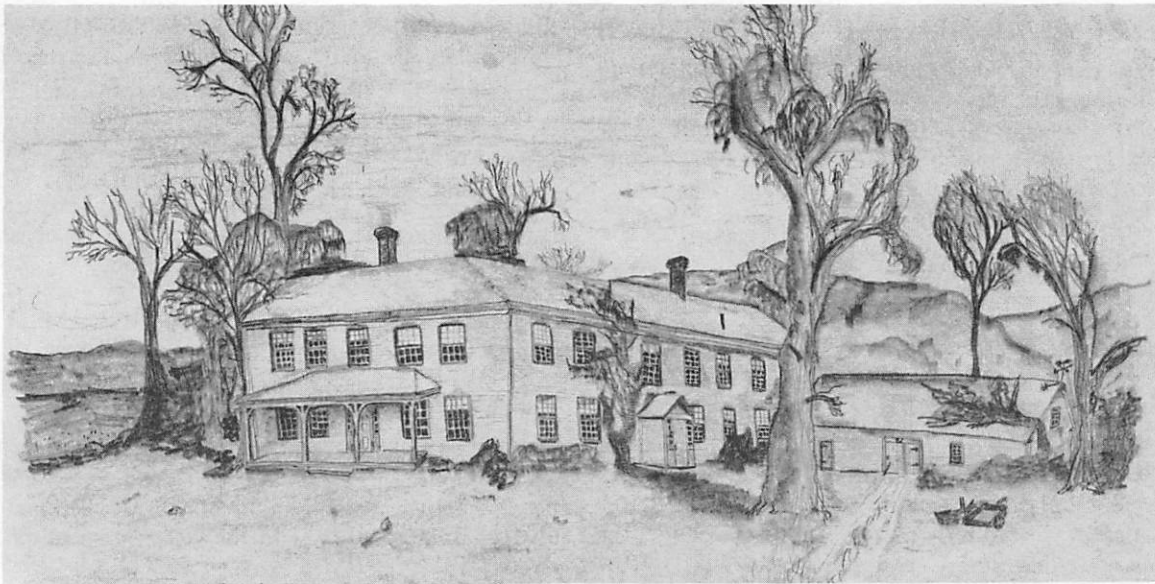
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Please check appropriate category and send your remittance to: Box 12, Bethel, Maine 04217

-----Sustaining \$2.50 (Individual)	-----Life over 55 years \$50.00 single
-----Contributing \$10.00	-----Life over 55 years \$75.00 couple
-----Patron \$25.00	-----Life under 55 years \$100.00 single
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Peabody Tavern, Gilead c. 1800. Sketch by Randall Heath Bennett
National Register of Historic Places

1981 - 1982 COMMITTEES

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The Bethel Historical Society

P.O. Box 12

Bethel, Maine 04217

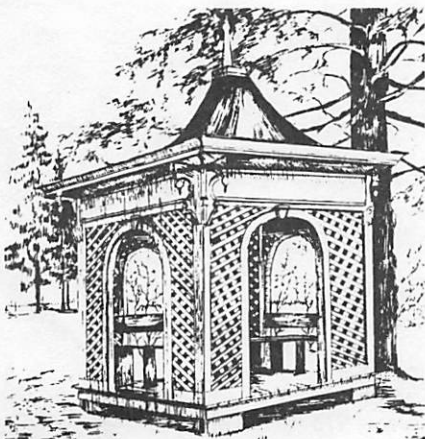
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